

# FORMER BELLE OF EXCLUSIVE BALTIMORE SOCIETY TELLS STORY OF WHY SHE GAVE UP HOME AND FRIENDS TO MARRY A GYPSY KING

## QUAINT PHILOSOPHY IN STORY OF NOMAD

Says Some Divorces Start Over a Cup of Coffee—Asserts That Happiness Pervades Her Life With the Gypsy Band.

(Continued from First Page.)

ional joys of today for the possible sorrows of a more circumspect tomorrow.

### Bohemia Found

Irresistible Fascination. To her, there is an irresistible fascination in this moving from place to place. New faces, new scenes, and new phases of human life are more absorbing than the shatter-brained conversation of the drawing room. The lullabies of a gypsy camp are more pleasing to her ear than the notes of grand opera; the variety of a life outdoors is more engaging than the routine of so-called social pleasures.

As a school girl, Miss Habersham was a dreamer. She wanted to be alone. She seemed "different" and her friends accepted her little girlish fancies, confident that with more mature years she would enter gracefully upon the social career mapped out for her.

But the yearning for the plains, the roving life, was within her, and she yielded, as have others before her, to a compelling force greater than the influence of earlier teaching and of a flattering environment.

Society stifled her, she said, with its shallowness and its conventions. Two weeks after her debut she had tired of it, and her thoughts began to wander again to school days, when she had become interested in a gypsy caravan. Since then the life had always appealed to her. She had studied in secret the gypsy language, and had read of the romances of these men and women of the road.

### Impulse Comes

And She Follows. The impulse came, and she followed it—blindly. Today she is one of them—reading fortunes on the outskirts of big cities, donning the gypsy costume when it is necessary to attract the wary believer in the occult, happy at all times to wait upon her king and envious not one whit of women and girls who have remained in the social maelstrom, and who idly while the days and nights away.

She is a picturesque figure—when she wishes to be—among the gypsy tents and wagons. More often, though, she prefers to meet one as a plain American girl, not afraid to turn gypsy if her heart so inclines. The life out doors has not faded her beauty. Her large black eyes flash as mischievously as ever, her skin is but slightly bronzed from exposure, her black hair befittingly adds a gypsy-like touch to a face and form altogether prepossessing.

She speaks in well modulated tones and in good English, for she is a student with and during her idle hours whiles away the time in writing poetry of her own making—poetry that has to do mainly with the thought upmost in this strange heart of hers—freedom and communion with nature at its best.

### THE WILD'S CALL

It was not fleeing fancy, this call of the wild that caused Jessie Habersham to leave a handsome Baltimore home and seek the tents and the camp fires of a gypsy life. It was no girlish impulse to be regretted as soon as obeyed. There has been no return of what might be termed the prodigal daughter.

Neither as the escapee of the venture-some youth, attracted by the temporary lure of the circus and the sawdust ring, to be compared to the step taken by Miss Habersham six years ago. To her there have come no regrets. Her face today is turned as steadfastly as it was then, to the plains and to the free and unpretentious life of a race of wanderers.

The nomadic existence has not palled upon the finer sensibilities of a one time society queen. Instead, she has become more enthralled in the delights of an

other queenly estate—that of the wife of a gypsy chieftain.

### Picture One

#### Of Perfect Content.

The interviewer, therefore, should not approach the wife of King George Michele with pity in his heart, for he is soon to see a picture of perfect content set upon nature's own stage and with nature's own colorings.

As one approaches the gypsy camp where Jessie Habersham reigns as queen, it is natural to call to mind the story of "The Bohemian Girl." But the heroine of this narrative is much unlike the vision conjured by song and story. She is still a matter of fact American girl, endowed with good common sense, and the accomplishments that came from the best of early advantages, despite the fact that her surroundings today are out of keeping with the talents she may possess. She retains, too, some of the mannerisms of a girl in the days when she moved in Baltimore society. She has never entirely forsaken these, nor, on the other hand, has she ever gone to the other extreme and affected the varicolored shawls and garments that make the gypsy women typical.

She talked with the freedom of her new life and yet with the reserve of those who realize that they live apart from the rest of mankind and are wanderers upon the face of the earth. At times her observations were almost colloquial in their breeziness; again, she would quote Tennyson at his best, and again she would let fall some bits of philosophy of her own making, born of a better understanding of things through the years she has communed with nature.

### Can't Explain

#### Leaving Her Home.

"Yes, it's true that I deserted the boarding school for the roving life of a gypsy," she began, with some show of pride that she had taken the step. "Why? I can't tell exactly now. Perhaps it was one of those idle cravings that come to one whose blood abounds with romance and things romantic. It might have been so construed at that time, I say. It must have had some more firm basis, however, or it could never have lasted for six long years."

"I don't know that I could explain it, and I don't believe others would understand it if I did. It is just something born in one and a part of one, concerning which others cannot know because of lack of similar feeling."

"Here I am in my little gypsy camp, instead of at the home I once knew, and in which I spent the days of my girlhood and my early womanhood. There are only six of us here, but there will be many more when summer comes, and we take to the trail again. We live knowing that today we are here, and that tomorrow may see us somewhere else. I like it better so."

### Loves Nature

#### She Once Favored

"Last night it rained—oh, so hard. The lightning and the thunder were terrific. I remember the time when, at home, I would have buried my head beneath the coverlet on my bed. Abject fear would have overtaken me."

"That is changed now. Somehow the storms make me happy. A great peace and content comes into my soul when the storm rages without and when I hear the tent flaps beating a tattoo about my head and feet, it makes me realize the might of nature. It causes me to feel that the mighty and the low all must bow to nature's will, and I fall asleep glad that I am one of her children."

"Yet, I would not have the world believe that it is because I am a 'crank' about nature that I am here. I love the outdoor life, and the fresh air, and the freedom of it all, but there are other reasons."

Sometimes I think that my soul is that of a wandering gypsy, by some strange decree of fate imprisoned in the being of an American girl. My ap-

## TWO VIEWS OF GYPSY QUEEN AND HER HOME



QUEEN JESSIE KEY HABERSHAM MICHELE, The Gypsy King's Wife.

pearance is that of thousands of young women who grace this land today, yet my soul is not attuned to the existence that the color of my skin would dictate for me.

The things that appear vital and of most importance to the average girl and woman to me are but the merest dross. I have no part in them. I cannot make them a part of my life. I am just different—that's all. I should not rebel against the inner self, for happiness never comes that way. Sooner or later the soul will have its outlet and one will regret the wasted years spent unhappily.

They call me the gypsy queen because I started "King George." I am no queen in the accepted sense of the word. I just want to be my husband's wife—a queen.

I met my king six years ago, when I started out to be a gypsy rover. He was good to me and I grew to love

him, for from the first day I knew that I should always be a gypsy, a wanderer, a creature of the wanderlust.

I am happy now, happier than I ever have been, even in the dreams of childhood days. Why, then, should I think of going back? Why give up the happiness we have for the sorrows that may come through its relinquishment? In this world and all that is promised in the next? Why should I leave my happiness for a life that is full of sorrows of people today who would give their all to be as happy as I now am?

He is not hard to look upon, this Roman chief. The imprint of his race is upon him; he is much the gypsy of song and story, truly representative of a people who have had no home since the thirteenth century, when they began their pilgrimages over western Europe.

Wanderlust Cern Pervades Their Hearts.

A glance at this man and the little group about him would tell the most observant that in their hearts there is no yearning for a permanent abiding place. In their blood has been ever inculcated the germ of the wanderlust, the love of horses, the desire to tinker, to delve into the future, to dream day dreams, and to sit idly by unmindful of

childhood days as the happiest of its

existence. Mine is a queer life. I have no happier days to remember than these I am living now.

Votes for women may be admirable in sentiment. They call me a queen, but I had rather be my husband's wife than have any title or privilege you could give me. It is strange other women aren't satisfied with that.

"I cannot accept the viewpoint of those who would have me return home. As long as one is satisfied, why should one seek conditions that may not bring such perfect content?"

QUEEN IN NAME ONLY.

QUEEN JESSIE is not ashamed that she wears the scepter over her own band only. She is not fully recognized as a gypsy when all the bands assemble and a gypsy council is held. At the camp, fifteen miles distant from where the Michele camp now lies, the national tribe of gypsies is ruled by "King John" Adams. The girl with the pure, white skin must sit by and see a more swarthy-skinned beauty usurp her place when she visits the camps of other wanderers.

But this doesn't disturb the peace of mind of the former Baltimore society girl. She has repeatedly said that she is not title hunting, even when it is bestowed by no greater court than a band of care-free rovers. She is living for "King George" and her kingdom encompasses the narrow confines of a tent and the little semi-circle of tents around it. Besides, she refuses to wear the garb prescribed by those who would be a real gypsy queen. Her dress is rather that of the wholly civilized devotee of outdoor life, than of a race or condition of people.

An American Girl, Although Gypsy.

When she received a representative of The Times, she appeared in a gray skirt, somewhat the worse for wear, and a waist not of recent make or style. Over this she wore an eton jacket, long since out of fashion's favor. At times she may turn her head and affect the colors that one always associates with the followers of the trail, but as a general thing she may be found as described—an American girl, simply dressed, possessing a gypsy soul.

Perhaps it is her aversion to picturesque costume, perhaps it is her fair skin, that precludes her acceptance by the others of the tribe as a queen of all the bands of wanderers, but whatever it may be, Mrs. George Michele, nee Miss Jessie Habersham, cares not so long as she holds a place among her own little coterie.

She was reticent when asked about her husband, except to say that his treatment of her is "grand," and that life in a tent with him is preferable to life in a Baltimore mansion without him. Beyond that she would not go.

And neither will he. Oft times he stood close by while she told of the charm of the new life. He didn't frown when she sometimes spoke of her father, for even a gypsy must know that it is not possible for one should forget entirely. The eyes of the gypsy queen softened when she spoke of the parent who reared her. A moment later she turned the same eyes upon "King George" and they softened with love for him.

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Former Debutante Declares She Has Never Regretted Casting Her Lot With Her Present Friends.

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